

On June 4, 1996, Fowler met with Shakopee representatives, including Chairman Stanley Crooks and lawyer-lobbyist Kurt BlueDog, both of whom had attended the April 28 meeting about Hudson. At the meeting, the tribal representatives delivered to the DNC a \$20,000 contribution from the tribe. The day before this meeting, Collier had written a briefing memorandum (in which he identified himself as “Former, Chief of Staff, Secretary Bruce Babbitt”) informing DNC staff that the Shakopee – whom he said “own and run one of the most financially successful Casinos in America”²⁷⁷ – had not been very politically active in the past, but would be bringing \$20,000 to the meeting, with “a very real interest in possible significant contributions in the future.”²⁷⁸ Collier stated in his memo that the Shakopee were “interested in raising one substantive issue with the Chairman: The Department of Interior’s possible reconsideration of the tribe’s adoption ordinance.”

The Adoption Ordinance issue concerned the legal process for adding members to the tribe. As such, given the enormous per capita distributions of gaming proceeds the being made by the tribe, and the capacity of new members to effect tribal elections, the ordinance had serious implications relating to both tribal control and the tribe’s gaming operations. Although the tribe had received DOI approval for the ordinance, tribal dissidents who were seeking reconsideration of the measure had retained a “well connected Democrat”²⁷⁹ to advance their cause. As Fowler’s

²⁷⁷Fowler also recalls that during the June 4 meeting the tribal representatives informed him that their tribes made monthly distributions to its members of \$50,000 to \$60,000 each.

²⁷⁸Memorandum from Thomas Collier to Gretchen Lerach, June 3, 1996. Within three and a half months of this meeting, the Shakopee would contribute an additional total of \$75,000 to the DNC.

²⁷⁹*Id.*